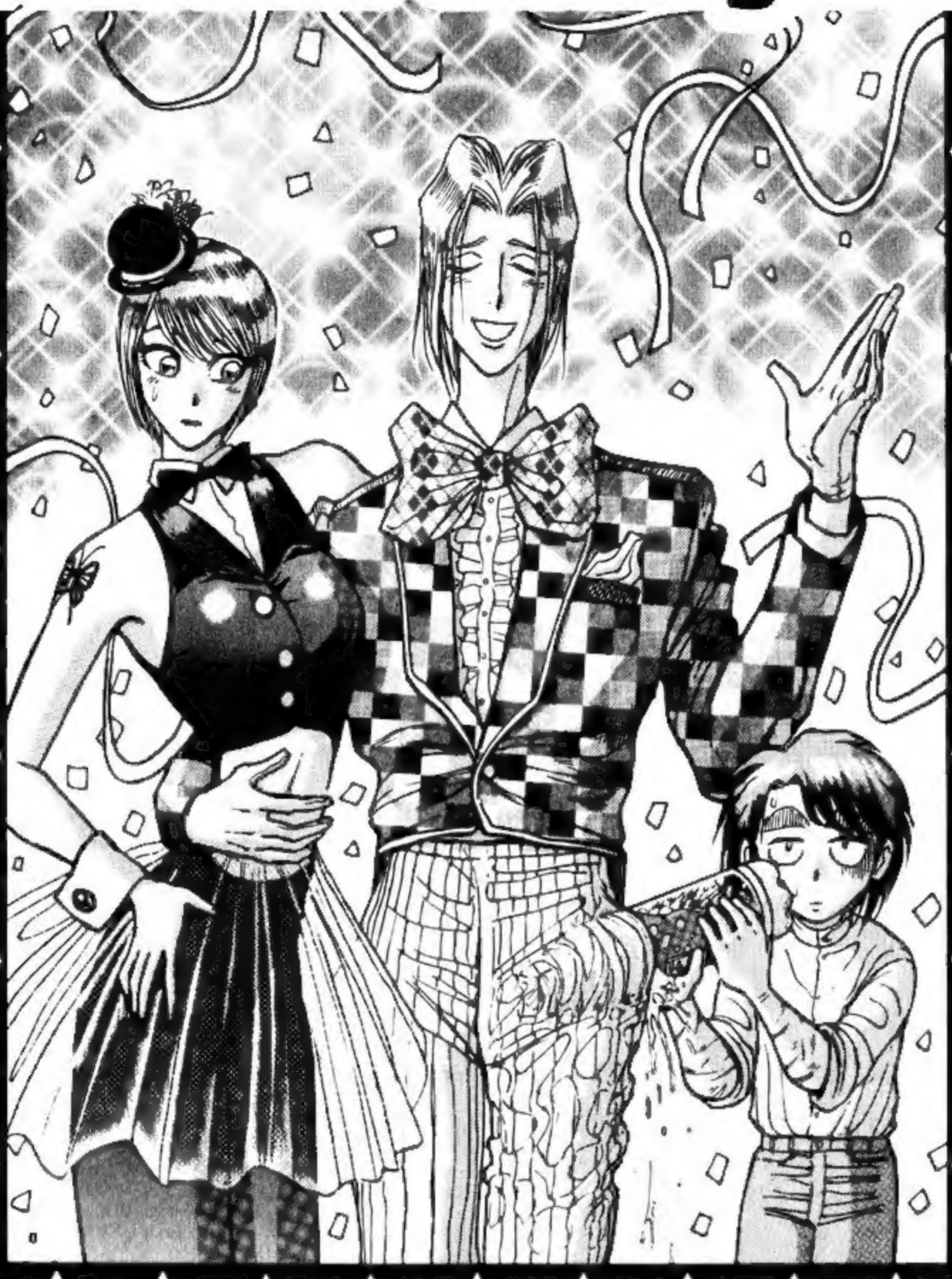
Intermission IV～ Another Closing Bell



WAS REALLY AN ARM FROM THIS PUPPET!
LOOK! THIS ARM THAT WAS ON ARLEQUIN ...
DOESN'T THAT MEAN YOU FOUGHT THIS GUY PERSON ONCE?!
WHAT DOES THAT MEAN, SHIROGANE ?!

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MAITRE GUY HAS ALWAYS ... PRO-TECTED ME ...
NO... NO, YOUNG MASTER ...

HE WAS AN ENEMY OF YOURS, WASN'T HE?!

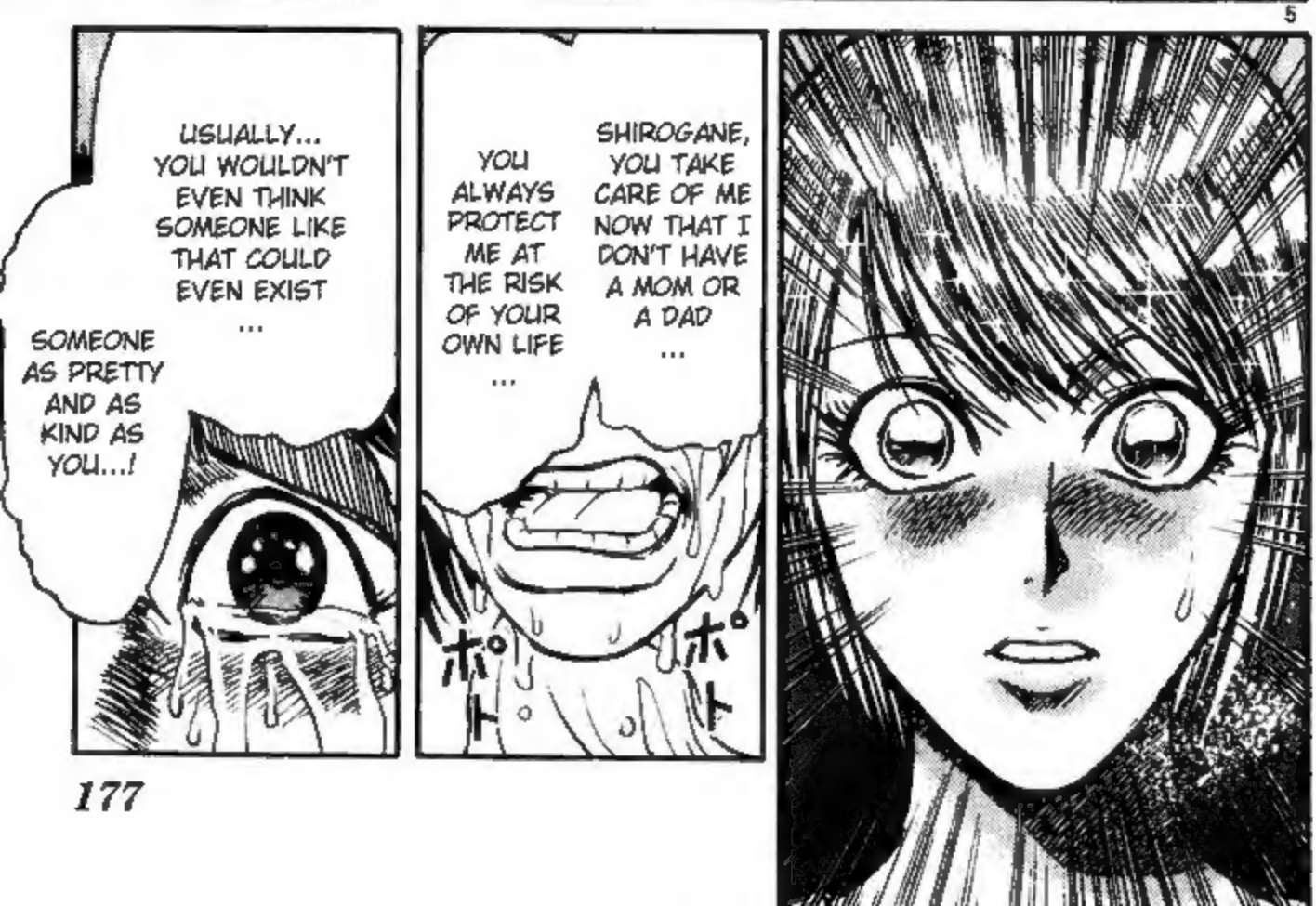
I ALSO HAD THE FEELING THAT THERE WAS SOME CONNECTION BETWEEN ARLEQUIN AND OLYMPIA ...
BUT IT WAS SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED BEFORE I WAS BORN ...
GRR...
TELL ME ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
MAITRE GUY WOULD NOT...

IF THAT SHOULD HAPPEN, YOU MAY END UP BEARING AN ENORMOUSLY HEAVY BURDEN.
THAT YOU MAY LEARN FOR YOURSELF WHEN YOU ARE OLDER.
THAT IS SOMETHING ...
I ASKED HIM MANY TIMES ABOUT THOSE ARMS, AND ABOUT THE SCRATCHES ON ARLEQUIN ...
THERE IS NO NEED FOR YOU TO KNOW.
RIGHT NOW ...

SO... ALTHOUGH I DON'T KNOW THE REASON EITHER ...
MAITRE GUY IS CERTAINLY NOT AN ENEMY—
THAT'S ENOUGH.
.....
AS HE SAID THAT, MAITRE, WHO WAS ALWAYS A DISTANT PERSON ...
HE HELD MY SHOULDER GENTLY, JUST FOR THAT MOMENT ...
WHAT?
I-IF YOU HAVE ...
ANY SORT OF COMPLAINT REGARDING ME, YOUNG MASTER ...
S-SINCE I HAVE NEVER REALLY LEARNED HOW TO SOCIALIZE WITH PEOPLE PROPERLY ...
IF I HAVE ANY FAULTS... I NEED YOU TO TELL ME, BUT I WILL CERTAINLY FIX THEM IF YOU DO ...
THAT'S ENOUGH... I GET IT. IF YOU SAY SO, SHIROGANE ...
AH ...
Y-YOU KNOW, YOUNG MASTER ...
COM-PLAINTS ...?

HOW COULD I HAVE ANYTHING LIKE THAT ...?

5


USUALLY... YOU WOULDN'T EVEN THINK SOMEONE LIKE THAT COULD EVEN EXIST ...
SOMEONE AS PRETTY AND AS KIND AS YOU...!
YOU ALWAYS PROTECT ME AT THE RISK OF YOUR OWN LIFE ...
SHIROGANE, YOU TAKE CARE OF ME NOW THAT I DON'T HAVE A MOM OR A DAD ...
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AND FORGET ABOUT NARUMI-NIICHAN.

SO... SHIROGANE, YOU SHOULD JUST FORGET EVERYTHING AND LIVE FREELY...
FORGET ABOUT PRO-TECTING ME...

Y-YOUNG MASTER ...

I JUST... WENT AND ASSUMED...

THE ONLY PERSON WHO'D EVER SHOWN YOU KINDNESS ...
THAT NARUMI-NIICHAN WAS...

BUT... I WAS WRONG.
OBVIOUSLY... YOU'RE OLDER THAN ME, AND YOU'VE HAD A LIFE I KNOW NOTHING ABOUT...
THAT NARUMI-NIICHAN WAS...
THE ONLY ONE WHO WAS ABLE TO CHANGE YOU...
BUT ... BUT STILL ...
SEEING THE SHIRO-GANE I LOVE ...
FORGET ABOUT THE NARUMI-NIICHAN I LOVE ...
I HATE IT...
FOR SAYING ALL THAT. I'M SUPPOSED TO BE A MAN...
SORRY ...
I SHOULD TRY AND ACT LIKE IT.
GRR...

SHIRO
...

WH-
WH-
WHAT
ARE
YOU
DOING
?!
SH-
SHIRO-
GANE
!!

トクーン
PLEASE LISTEN TO THE SOUND ...
OF MY HEART.
SFX: BABUMP BABUMP BABUMP
9
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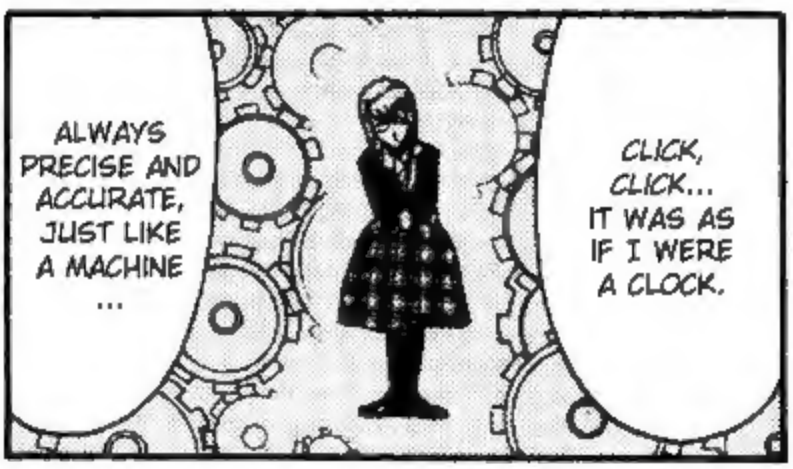
トクーン
CAN YOU HEAR IT?
THUMP, THUMP, THUMP, THUMP ...
HEART-BEAT ...
SHIRO-GANE'S ...
AH!

WHEN I WAS TRAVELING WITH MAITRE GUY...
THE ONLY SOUND MY HEART MADE WAS CLICK, CLICK.

I HATED THE SOUND OF MY OWN HEART.


ALWAYS PRECISE AND ACCURATE, JUST LIKE A MACHINE ...
CLICK, CLICK... IT WAS AS IF I WERE A CLOCK.

... BUT ...
WHEN I GREW UP, A CERTAIN PERSON GAVE ME A REAL HEARTBEAT.

A DREAM OF A MECHANICAL GIRL WIELDING A PUPPET TO DESTROY MECHANICAL DOLLS THAT WERE JUST THE SAME AS HER IN THE END...
IT WAS A NIGHT-MARE ...

SFX: BUMP BUMP BUMP

IT'S BECAUSE OF ANOTHER PERSON ...
WHO LIVES ON IN YOUR MEMORIES AS WELL, YOUNG MASTER.

12

I THINK THAT ...
HUMAN BEINGS ARE HUMAN BECAUSE ...
THEY TAKE THEIR LIFE, AND MAKE IT PART OF THEMSELVES.

SHI-RO-GA-NE ...
YOUNG MASTER, YOU THINK I WOULD BE HAPPY IF I FORGOT ALL THESE PARTS OF MYSELF ...?
I THINK ... YOU ARE MIS-TAKEN.

I WILL NOT FORGET.
I WANT TO LIVE BY MAKING EVERYTHING I EXPERIENCE ...
A PART OF MY HEART-BEAT.
I THINK MY FEELINGS FOR... THAT OTHER PERSON... MIGHT BE A VERY DIFFERENT KIND OF LOVE...
SHIROGANE... YOU LOVE THIS GUY PERSON, DON'T YOU ...?
YES ...
BUT I...

YOU'RE SO INNOCENT ...
SHIRO-GANE ...

SHIRO-GANE.
I LOVE YOU TOO ...

I ...
I ALSO ...
HM?

GOOD NIGHT.
Y-YOU DON'T HAVE TO THANK ME FOR THAT.
G'NIGHT, SHIRO-GANE!

OH, MY ...
THANK YOU SO MUCH, YOUNG MASTER.
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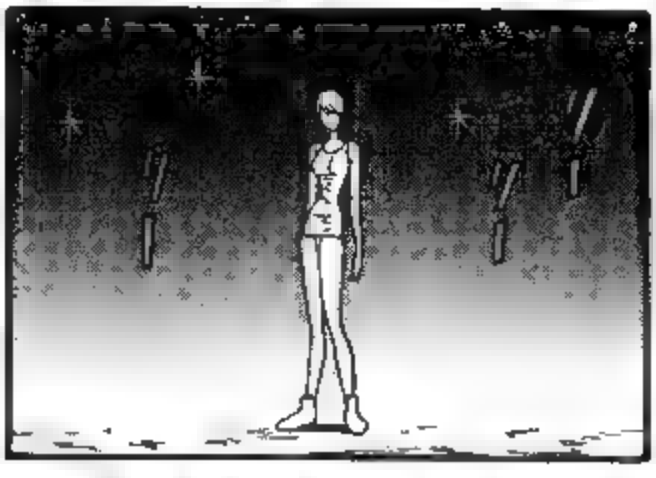

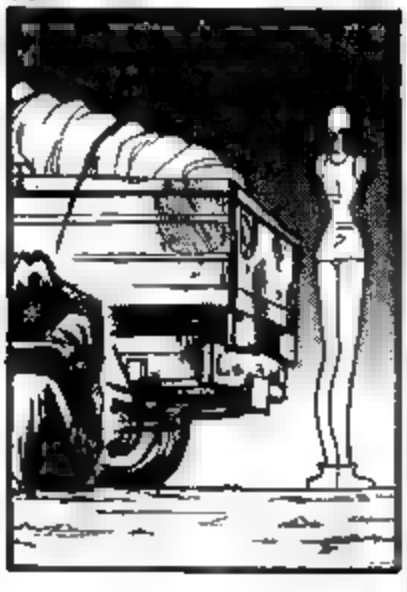

IS BECOMING MORE AND MORE HUMAN ...
THE SOUND OF MY HEART ...

BUT... WHAT A COINCIDENCE ... THAT I SHOULD COME TO THE VERY CIRCUS...
WHERE ÉLÉONORE AND THAT BOY LIVE... AND THAT NARUMI SHOULD HAVE ENCOUNTERED THEM AS WELL...
DIF-FERENT FROM HER FEELINGS ...
FOR THAT OTHER PERSON ...? I'M A LITTLE HURT ...

MA-MAN.
I HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN WHAT YOU ASKED OF ME...
パチ
FUFU ... YES, I KNOW.

ヤアアア

ABOUT YOUR
CHILD.

ANGELINA ...
MAMAN ...

ヒュウウウ

I WAS THINKING OF MY LATE DAUGHTER.
... IT'S NOTHING LIKE THAT ...

SOME-THING WRONG, LUCILLE?
.....

YOU'VE FOUND THE ONES YOU SHIROGANE HAVE BEEN CHASING ALL THIS TIME.
AFTER ALL...

BUT I GUESS IT'S NO WONDER.
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO SAY SOMETHING LIKE THAT...

〈掲載・週刊少年サンデー平成12年36号より平成12年46号まで〉

からくりサーカス⑯

少年サンデーコミックス

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One of the chapters this volume ran a few pages longer, so there's no omake this volume. A new arc begins next week!

Thanks to Judash137 on the mangafox forums for removing the Japanese text, and to the anonymous person who tipped me off to that!

Any group with more experience or skill is welcome to take over at any time or to redo chapters I have already done if they are below the quality that this series deserves.